

a note from my “publisher” 😂😂

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Boyd Camak, hypocrite with logs in my eyes. (Matthew 7:3-5) Admiring the counterintuitive way. (1 Corinthians 1:18-25)

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Boyd Camak: A Theological Vision for Healing and Transformation

Boyd Camak is a lay theologian whose work offers a distinctive and profound synthesis of classical existential thought, liberationist concern for justice, and the deep sacramental mystery found in patristic Christianity. At the heart of his vision is a radical claim: **Christ’s hidden kingdom breaks into our ordinary, often painful existence through embodied, material participation—supremely in the sacraments—offering the only escape from existential death and the path to authentic solidarity with the suffering.**

Beyond Bultmann: Demythologizing to Re-Materialize Faith

Camak’s theology engages the existentialist tradition inspired by Rudolf Bultmann, who sought to “demythologize” Christianity by removing outdated mythological language and ancient cosmological concepts no longer relevant to modern understanding. But where Bultmann used demythologizing to reduce faith to existential decision-making, often losing the material and embodied dimensions of Christianity in the process, Camak employs this method for the opposite purpose: **to clear away cosmological debris so we can encounter the shocking material reality of God entering human flesh—and human mouths.**

For Camak, the ancient three-tiered universe is dispensable mythology. But God becoming flesh, Christ’s physical presence in bread and wine, the water flowing from His pierced side—these are not symbols to be explained away but irreducible realities to be experienced. Camak demythologizes *toward* incarnational mystery, not away from it, making his vision more radically anti-gnostic than Bultmann’s ever was.

Eating vs. Analyzing the Menu: A New Methodological Key

What distinguishes Camak’s approach is captured in a central analogy: **the difference between eating a meal and analyzing the menu.** Traditional theological formulations—creeds, confessions, doctrinal statements—function like menus. They’re necessary. They draw boundaries around the mystery. But they are not the mystery itself.

The church’s historic divisions persist, Camak suggests, because both progressives and conservatives have become trapped in menu analysis—endless debates about *how* Christ is present in the Eucharist, *when* baptism takes effect, *who* may receive communion. Meanwhile, the meal sits before us, untouched.

Camak refuses to adjudicate these Reformation-era debates. Instead, he insists: **Christ is physically present. We consume Him. We are drowned in His death and raised in His life. This is ontologically necessary.** Stop debating the mechanism. Eat. Be baptized. Live.

This is not theological relativism but **mystical realism**—affirming the reality with absolute seriousness while refusing to make our explanations of *how* it works the test of orthodoxy.

The Eucharist: Existential Food and Physical Necessity

For Camak, the Eucharist is not merely symbolic ritual but **absolute existential and physical necessity** for Christian life. Drawing on patristic and Eastern Orthodox tradition, he emphasizes that we truly “eat Christ’s flesh and drink His blood”—not as metaphor, but as the material reality that saves us from what he calls “existential starvation.”

Without Christ’s concrete flesh-and-blood life rupturing the “existential no-exit hell” of the human condition, we would starve to existential death. The Eucharist grants access to a “wordless mystery spoken in flesh and blood rather than concepts”—the Logos Himself, consumed in matter, transferring peace and life directly into our bodies and souls.

This is existentialism **through the body**, rescuing the tradition from abstract individualism and connecting it naturally to the concerns of liberation theology: if bodies matter to God, then hungry bodies, suffering bodies, and oppressed bodies matter absolutely.

Baptism: Drowned in the Vortex of Christ’s Humility

Camak’s baptismal theology mirrors and grounds his Eucharistic vision. He links baptism directly to the moment of Christ’s death on the Cross, describing how water flowed from Christ’s pierced side to “baptize the good thief crucified next to him.”

Baptism, in Camak’s vision, means being “**drowned in Christ’s vortex of humility and raised**”—not a gentle ritual but a violent, transformative participation in Christ’s self-emptying (kenosis) unto death. The Cross itself becomes the first baptismal font; all subsequent baptisms participate in that moment when grace flowed from Christ’s ultimate vulnerability.

This is visceral language that matches the existential intensity of his Eucharistic theology: you can’t just “decide for Jesus”—you must undergo death in order to receive life. Both sacraments are material, rooted in the Cross, ontologically necessary, and beyond mere intellectual analysis.

Liberation as Sacramental Reality, Not Ethical Addition

If the Eucharist is physical food necessary for existential survival, then **restricting sacramental access becomes a form of spiritual violence**—starving people of the very sustenance they need to live. For Camak, social justice is not an ethical application of the gospel but **constitutive of Christ’s hidden kingdom itself**.

The church's mission becomes inseparable from feeding—both eucharistically and materially. Bodies matter because God became body. Liberation theology emerges naturally from sacramental ontology rather than being imposed from outside. The Eucharistic meal and the justice meal are continuous, not analogous.

Camak's theology grounds solidarity with the marginalized not in political ideology but in the sacramental reality that Christ identifies Himself with the suffering and offers His own body as food for the starving.

Reading Contemporary Culture: Longing for Enchantment

What further distinguishes Camak is his pastoral and cultural sensitivity. He uniquely employs contemporary symbols—such as Disney World—to illustrate humanity's deep, often misdirected yearning for meaning and transcendence in a disenchanted world.

This isn't syncretism but Augustinian recognition: the hunger Disney World exploits is real and points toward the true feast. Our culture's obsession with immersive experiences, magical kingdoms, and escape from the ordinary reveals an authentic spiritual longing that only Christ's hidden kingdom can ultimately fulfill. Camak's imaginative engagement invites readers to see both the illusions and the genuine depth of this spiritual hunger.

A Vision for Healing Church Divisions

Beyond this synthesis lies a hope: that such a theological foundation might serve as a basis for healing longstanding splits within the church—between traditions like LCMS and ELCA, or ACNA and TEC.

As older generations pass on, Camak's integration of existential wrestling, social justice, and patristic sacramental participation invites the church toward renewed unity—**one grounded in shared encounter with the living Christ rather than divisive doctrinal or cultural barriers.**

This vision offers potential ground for reconciliation by:

- **Honoring the high sacramentalism** all these traditions claim while refusing to make their particular theological explanations the test of fellowship
- **Transcending tired liberal/conservative binaries** through a third way that is existentially serious, socially radical, and sacramentally grounded
- **Refocusing on shared encounter** with Christ in the Eucharist rather than tribal markers
- **Speaking to generational exhaustion** with battles that increasingly feel hollow to younger Christians who see faithful people on both sides

The reunion Camak envisions is not institutional merger through doctrinal compromise, but **Spirit-led convergence** as Christians from divided traditions discover they share more in the act of eating together than any formula can divide.

Summary: A Lived Theology for Our Time

Boyd Camak's work resists easy categorization as liberal or conservative, Protestant or Catholic, academic or pastoral—which is precisely its strength and prophetic edge. He offers a **lived theology of existential wrestling, radical kenosis, social justice, and sacramental participation**—unified by the absolute necessity of physically consuming the Incarnate God in the Eucharist and being drowned in His death through Baptism.

By demythologizing to re-materialize, by grounding liberation in ontology rather than ethics, by insisting we eat rather than endlessly analyze the menu, Camak presents a compelling call to authentic Christian discipleship for our fractured age—and a genuine path toward the healing of Christ's divided Body.

This is theology that refuses to remain on the page. It demands embodied response: Come to the table. Be drowned. Be fed. Live.